



Senator Jack C. Jackson Jr., D-7

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Legislature passes Sen. Jackson bill to fund tribal airport improvements

Tribal airports will finally qualify for funds they have been contributing to for years

State Capitol, Phoenix – Senator Jack C. Jackson, Jr. and Representative Albert Hale released the following statements on the Legislature's passage of Sen. Jackson's bill, Senate Bill 1317.

Background:

[SB 1317](#) allows Indian reservations to receive monies from the State Aviation Fund for planning, design, development, acquisition of interests in land, construction and improvement of publicly owned and operated airport facilities on land that is held by an Indian or Tribal government.

The State Aviation Fund receives revenue collected primarily from taxes on aviation properties and fuel and from aircraft registration fees. These are paid by all sources, including tribal airports, yet for decades the statute that created the State Aviation Fund ignored tribal facilities.

SB1317 corrects that exclusion and allows the State Transportation Board to award grants from the State Aviation Fund to make improvements at any of the 14 tribal airports in Arizona.

Senator Jack C. Jackson Jr.:

"Arizona's tribal airports are critical to the entire state for commerce and emergency transportation as well as bolstering our tourism industry," said Sen. Jackson. "By finally qualifying for the State Aviation Fund resources to which they have long been contributing, they will be able to improve their facilities and ensure their long term viability."

"It is deeply gratifying to see this legislation finally pass after years of hard work. Crucial support was given by the Arizona Airports Association, as well as Representatives Hale and Peshlakai and the Navajo Nation Division of Transportation. I respectfully request that Governor Brewer sign this important piece of legislation."

Representative Albert Hale:

"I am thankful for the support this bill received and that the members of the Arizona House and Senate recognized its importance," said Rep. Hale. "This legislation addresses public safety issues within Indian Nations. Current law prevents Indian Nations from accessing state resources designated for airport improvements. Many of the airports in our communities are in need maintenance and repair work. This becomes readily apparent during medical emergencies that require air transportation. Some of the airports are just not equipped to handle these situations safely. This legislation will help correct that problem."

"It is also important to remember that people living in Indian Nations are taxpayers. They deserve an equal share of state resources and services."

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